

U.S. Department
of Transportation

United States
Coast Guard



Commanding Officer
Marine Safety Office

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7-16-01

16480
16 July 2001

Mr. Joe Alli
Atofina Chemical Company
17168 W. Jefferson
Riverview, MI 48192-44270

Dear Sir:

As per 40 CFR 300.415, the U.S. Coast Guard, as the lead federal agency in responding to a toxic chemical release that occurred at your plant, has conducted an evaluation of site conditions at the Atofina Chemical Facility and in neighboring communities.

Based on that site evaluation, I, as Federal On-Scene Coordinator, have determined that a smoke plume resulting from a methyl mercaptan rail car fire carried an unknown quantity of toxic chemicals into the air on Saturday July 14, 2001, and that a limited portion of nearby human populations downwind of the incident may have been exposed to pollutants. Existing data from air monitoring conducted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on 14, 15, and 16 July 2001 indicate the presence of the chemicals released into the environment on Saturday has abated and no longer poses a substantial risk to the public or the environment.

Based on that same evaluation, I have determined also that, while the situation has stabilized and the source of the air release is controlled, there is a continued risk, but no imminent threat to nearby human populations or to the public resulting from the presence of the rail cars that remain in the affected area of the facility. There are also a number of inside-the-fence areas of potential contamination your company will need to address to meet all applicable federal, state, and local standards.

Based on the continued risk, I direct your company and plant to comply with the following actions until the existing risk is satisfactorily resolved:

1. Continue to work closely with the Riverview Fire Department and other appropriate federal, state, county and local officials to ensure the safety of nearby human populations.
2. Conduct regular monitoring and daily air monitoring in the vicinity of the affected rail cars and around the perimeter of your property to ensure no leaks are detected. Submit your air monitoring plan for review and approval. The plan must be from a qualified third party consultant, to start as soon as possible. Report notice of any change in current conditions immediately to me and all other involved authorities.

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3. Develop, for my review and approval, written plans for action your company may wish to take regarding the start-up of plant operations in the affected area or repairs to the affected rail cars. This requirement will be ongoing and task-specific, so appropriate governmental oversight can occur in concert with planned activities.
4. Continue to work with the local community, exposed persons, and the Wayne County Health Department to respond appropriately to reports by individuals who may have been exposed to the toxic release.

Thank you for your company concern and continued cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "S. P. Garrity".

S. P. GARRITY
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Federal On-Scene Coordinator